

## Determining if Students Will Complete the IEP Goals Within the Implementation Period

by Merv Blunt, Central Office

As a teacher you have several sources of information available to help decide if a student is going to accomplish an IEP goal during the IEP implementation time. The first source of information is to check if you are collecting the right type of performance data on the goal or objective. Chart 1 illustrates how to decide what type of data to collect based upon the type of information needed.

After examining the data and deciding that you are collecting the appropriate data, you need to use the data to evaluate how fast the student is learning. If the student is not making progress, you need to determine why the student is not making progress. You can gain valuable information by graphing the raw data. Chart 2 illustrates how graphing all the data points reveals a learning picture. From the learning picture, you can see how the student is progressing or if there is a lack of progress and how to address the concern.

A further source of information would be the quarterly analysis of data for reporting student progress to parents. Check to see if the student is making adequate progress to complete the IEP goal. Most IEPs tend to run for a year, so in theory, each quarter the student should be making approximately 25 percent of goal attainment. If the student is at 25 percent, but prompting is needed, the teacher will have to decide based on the student's history, abilities and rate of learning if the student will make adequate progress over the next three quarters to accomplish the IEP goal. The last two quarters of the IEP period are the critical quarters to examine the data and alter strategies if it appears the student will not accomplish the goal.

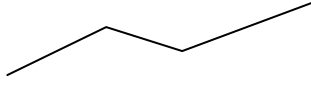
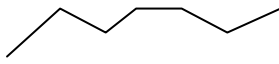
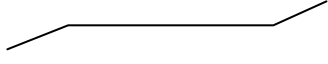
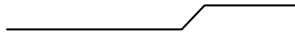

By using all of these sources of information, it is possible to make effective changes in modifications and adjustments to the teaching strategies, the skill level, and the reinforcement. The intent is for the student to be able to accomplish during the implementation period all the IEP goals developed by the IEP team.

**Chart 1**

| <b>Types of Data...</b>   | <b>How to Use...</b>   | <b>Examples...</b>   |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Frequency:</b> Measures how often a response occurs  | Determine the number of correct responses or the percentage of correct responses in relation to opportunities. Teacher must decide how many responses are needed to provide adequate data. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Percent of correct responses</li><li>• Number of correct responses</li><li>• How many steps in task analysis are correct</li></ul>                         |
| <b>Duration:</b> Measures the total time a response occurred out of a specific amount of time | Time the response from beginning to end.   | How long the student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is engaged in activity</li><li>• Performs a skill</li><li>• Has a behavior outburst</li><li>• Maintains proper positioning</li></ul> |
| <b>Time Sample:</b> Records the presence or absence of a response in short intervals          | Set a standard amount of time and only count responses occurring during that time period.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attending to activity</li><li>• Staying in seat</li><li>• Attending to a vocational skill</li></ul>  |

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|   |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being on-task</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Plot Recording:</b> Determines frequency, time of day and duration of response | Graph how long and when something occurred.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behavior analysis</li> <li>• Toileting</li> <li>• Seizures</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Latency Recording:</b> Determines how quickly the student responds             | Measure how long a student takes to initiate a response. Not concerned if response is right or wrong. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follows directions</li> <li>• Offers independent response</li> <li>• Initiates and responds to communication</li> <li>• Initiates task</li> </ul> |

**Chart 2**

| Learning Pictures |                              |   |
|-------------------|------------------------------|---|
| 1                 | Steady progress with bumps   |    |
| 2                 | Bouncing up and down         |    |
| 3                 | Progress, then long plateaus |  |
| 4                 | Flat                         |  |
| 5                 | Regressive                   |  |

### Interpreting Your Learning Pictures

1. Steady progress, with bumps:
  - a. No need for instructional changes.
  - b. Keep doing whatever you are doing -- it works.
  - c. Continue to check the student's progress to see if it is sufficient to accomplish the IEP goal within the implementation period.
2. Bouncing up and down:
  - a. Learning is occurring but reinforcement is not consistent enough to motivate the student.
  - b. The student demonstrates the ability to learn but needs either more reinforcement or more consistent reinforcement.
  - c. Verify that the reinforcer is motivating to the student and not just what you think would be reinforcing.
  - d. Use only powerful reinforcers if the learning picture shows bouncing.
  - e. Determine if the student is satiated with the reinforcer.
  - f. Controlling reinforcers:

- Just because a student is improving at a goal does not mean reinforcement should stop.
  - Reinforcement needs to be slowly faded and paired with verbal praise.
  - If you stop the reinforcement too soon, the student will not be successful.
  - The student may realize that if he doesn't do the skill during the activity, the teacher will bring out the reinforcer.
3. Progress with long plateaus:
    - a. Are the teaching steps too broad for the student to accomplish – acquisition, fluency, generalization?
    - b. Change teaching more frequently – strategies, progression, materials, and opportunities for learning.
    - c. If student is stuck on one step, then consider:
      - Doing a task analysis to see if you have forgotten a step.
      - If using a task analysis – use the branching technique and teach it individually. When success occurs, return it to task analysis.
  4. Flat:
    - a. Stop teaching until you have reevaluated your teaching strategies, materials and teaching progression, reinforcement and level of difficulty.
    - b. Examine the student's consistency in responses.
    - c. Examine your consistency of responses to the student.
  5. Regressive:
    - a. Reassess the reason(s) for the regression. Is it motivation or confusion in teaching or learning a skill?
    - b. Rethink what you wanted to accomplish with this skill. Is there another way to teach this skill?

“The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. Inquiries related to Department programs may be directed to the Jefferson State Office Building, Title IX Coordinator, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 205 Jefferson Street, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0480; telephone number 573-751-4581.”